

EXPERTS: NO EVIDENCE AUTOPSY PHOTO ALTERED

Based on the conflicting statements made to The Globe by the Dallas doctors concerning the location of President Kennedy's head wound, Yale Law School professor Burke Marshall, acting as spokesman for the Kennedy family, allowed the newspaper to become the first news organization ever to view the photographs and X-rays taken at the late President's autopsy.

Though the photographs and X-rays have been made available to a select group of medical researchers over the years, they are not open to the public and remain stored inside the National Archives in Washington. The Archives acquired the material in 1966 under a deed of gift from the Kennedy family. But under the terms of that deed, the family, through Marshall, still controls access to the autopsy material.

It was also arranged that an independent panel of three photo-optics experts and a radiologist could examine the photographs and X-rays of the back of the head to see if they had been tampered with, as alleged by Robert Groden, who served as the photo consultant to the House Assassinations Committee.

Groden asserted in his committee re-

port dissent that four official autopsy photographs had been forged because within the circumference of Kennedy's head, there could be seen "... an irregular line. Within this line, the hair appears black and wet. On the outside of the line, it is auburn and completely dry." He said it appeared this was "characteristic of crop lines in matte insert processes used for retouching and recompositioning of photographs."

The panel of optics experts consisted of Milton Ford, associate chief of photo services for the National Geographic Society in Washington; Hutson K. Howell, vice president and general manager of Coulter Systems Corp. in Bedford and formerly head of the photo science department for the Itek Corp., a Lexington optics research and development firm; Charles W. Wyckoff, co-owner and manager of Applied Photo Sciences in Needham, and Dr. Dieter Schellinger, chairman of the department of radiology at Washington's Georgetown University Hospital.

Also on The Globe's panel, having already expressed an opinion, were Groden and Frank Scott, director of the Advanced Technology Laboratory at Perkin-Elmer Corp., an electro-optics firm in Danbury, Conn. Scott served on the House Assassinations Committee's photo panel and was

the man who conducted tests on the committee's behalf in which he concluded that the autopsy photographs were authentic.

Panel members were given access to all 52 photographs taken at the autopsy. After Groden expanded upon his views on the alleged photo alterations and Scott gave a rebuttal, the four other panelists spent the next 45 minutes studying the photos and X-rays in detail, using various optics instruments.

Then, in separate statements, all four said they could detect no evidence that the materials had been altered in any way, thereby validating the conclusions of the House committee.

The photo experts agreed with Groden that there was an area at the back of the President's head wherein the hair appears to be abnormally dark, but they said this must have been because the hair was washed before the photographs were taken to make the wound visible. They said the area looked wet.

They also said the fact that other photographs of the back of the head had been taken from the same perspective, but from a slightly different angle, created a "stereo" view which precluded the possibility that an alteration of one photo would escape undetected.

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